

## Notice of Intent to Certify Sole Source

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**To:** Interested Parties  
**From:** Craig P. Orgeron, Ph.D. *CP*  
**CC:** ITS Project Number 41985  
**Date:** August 4, 2015  
**Re:** Sole Source Certification Number 3806 for manufacturer maintenance for Automated Accessible Casework Environment (AACE) system, integration to the Mississippi Division of Medicaid's Long-Term Services and Support system (LTSS) and to the State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Common Intake and Reporting System (MS WORKS) for the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS)

**Contact Name:** Jill Chastant

**Contact Phone Number:** 601-432-8214

**Contact E-mail Address:** Jill.Chastant@its.ms.gov

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### Sole Source Certification Award Details

Regarding Information Technology Services (ITS) Sole Source Certification Number 3806 for manufacturer maintenance for the Automated Accessible Casework Environment (AACE) System, integration to the Mississippi Division of Medicaid's Long-Term Services and Support System (LTSS) and to the State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Common Intake and Reporting System (MS WORKS) for the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services, please be advised that ITS intends to award maintenance and integration services to Alliance Enterprises, Inc. as the sole source provider of manufacturer maintenance and integration through December 31, 2018, in an amount not to exceed \$1,230,817.00. For an explanation regarding Mississippi state law, policy and procedures for sole source procurements, refer to Attachment C: Sole Source Procurement Overview.

### Sole Source Criteria

1. The product or services being purchased must perform a function for which no other product or source of services exist:

**The AWARE software is proprietary software owned and licensed by Alliance Enterprises, Inc. The modifications to integrate with the LTSS system at the Mississippi Division of Medicaid can only be performed by Alliance Enterprises, Inc., as well as integration to the State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The AWARE software maintenance Agreement is also being renewed for three years. The customer's sole source certification request is included as Attachment A.**

2. The purchaser must be able to show specific business objectives that can be met only through the unique product or services:

**The AWARE software has been in production in the State since 2000 and is often referred to as AACE. Alliance is the only vendor who can make modifications to the AWARE software. Alliance is responsible for federally mandated changes to the AWARE software. The customer's sole source certification request is included as Attachment A.**

3. The product or services must be available only from the manufacturer and not through resellers who could submit competitive pricing for the product or services:

**Alliance Enterprises, Inc. is the only vendor who offers maintenance and support of the AWARE software and can make modifications to the AWARE software. The vendor's sole source certification letter is included as Attachment B.**

4. If services, explain why the amount to be expended for the services is reasonable.

**Vendor has proposed a fixed-bid, deliverable based contract. The vendor assumes the risk if the work takes longer than anticipated.**

**This project is expected to be 2-3 months in duration. This is a very reasonable duration and a minimum of 2 months shorter given the vendor already knows:**

- o **The Aware server implementation at MDRS**
- o **Aware data model and business rules**
- o **The MDRS technical and business staff**
- o **Aware system and WIOA regulations**
- o **Webservice integration with Aware**

5. If services, explain what the agency did to obtain the best possible price for the services.

**Using this vendor will save the State a total of 110 to 180 billable hours, between \$16,500 to \$36,000, depending on the consultant hourly rates. The vendor is already knowledgeable in the Aware system, WIOA draft regulations and Federal reporting policy directives. The State will not incur costs for the consultant to read/learn the regulations. This also reduces the elapsed time of the project, saving the State 40-100 hours of billable hours.**

**The vendor has developed designs for future product improvements to align with new WIOA regulations. The State will not incur costs for the consultant to listen to all user group meetings and study the designs, saving the State 20-30 hours of billable hours.**

**The vendor is the developer of the system, has all technical documentation and subject matter experts. The State will not incur costs for the consultant to learn the Aware system including the data model, saving the State a minimum of 50 hours of billable hours.**

**The vendor works remotely on multiple projects at one time. The State will not incur costs of the consultant "down time" between meetings with the State or nSPARC staff. The vendor provides a variety of job functions to fulfill this project including: Account Manager, Project Manager, Sr. Business Systems Analyst and Sr. Technical Architect. The State does not incur the costs to ramp up each of these individuals or pay their rate while not fully engaged in the project.**

## Schedule

Task	Date
First Advertisement Date	08/04/15
Second Advertisement Date	08/11/15
Response Deadline From Objectors	08/18/15, at 3:00 P.M. Central Time
Notice of Award/No Award Posted	Not before 08/19/15

## Project Details

The AWARE software has been in production in the State since 2000 and is often referred to as AACE. Alliance is the only vendor who can make modifications to the AWARE software. Alliance is responsible for federally mandated changes to the AWARE software.

The Mississippi Division of Medicaid (MDOM) LTSS system is customized for MDOM and is available for use by all of their partners. In order for MDRS to utilize the system, upgrades are needed for the AACE system to integrate with the LTSS system. MDRS is also federally mandated to integrate their existing AWARE system to the State WIOA Common Intake and Reporting System (MS WORKS). In addition, the maintenance of the AACE system is being extended by three years.

## Submission Instructions and Format of Response from Objecting Parties

Interested parties who have reason to believe that the manufacturer direct maintenance and integration services should not be certified as a sole source should provide information in the following format for the state to use in determining whether or not to proceed with awarding the Sole Source contract to Alliance Enterprises, Inc.

### 1.1 Interested Party Information

1.1.1 Contact Name, Phone Number and email address

1.1.2 Company Website URL, if applicable

### 1.2 Objection to Sole Source Certification

1.2.1 Interested parties must present specific objections to the Sole Source certification using the criteria listed above.

1.2.2 A statement regarding the Interested Party's capabilities as related to this Sole Source Certification Request.

1.3 Comments will be accepted at any time prior to Tuesday, August 18, 2015, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time) to Jill Chastant at [Jill.Chastant@its.ms.gov](mailto:Jill.Chastant@its.ms.gov) or at the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services, 3771 Eastwood Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39211. Responses may be delivered by hand, via regular mail, overnight delivery, e-mail or by fax. Fax number is (601) 713-6380. ITS WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DELAYS IN THE DELIVERY OF RESPONSES. It is solely the responsibility of the Interested Parties that responses reach ITS on time. Interested Parties may contact Jill Chastant to

verify the receipt of their Responses. Responses received after the deadline will be rejected.

1.4 Interested Party responses should include the following information:

**SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO  
Sole Source Certification No. 3806-41985  
Accepted until August 18, 2015 @ 3:00 p.m.,  
ATTENTION: Jill Chastant**

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Jill Chastant at 601-432-8214 or via email at [Jill.Chastant@its.ms.gov](mailto:Jill.Chastant@its.ms.gov).

Attachment A: Customer Sole Source Certification Request  
Attachment B: Vendor Correspondence  
Attachment C: Sole Source Procurement Overview



3771 Eastwood Drive  
 Jackson, Mississippi 39211  
 Phone 601-432-8000 Fax 601-713-6380

## Sole Source Certification Request

<b>Project Title:</b> <b>AACE maintenance and support</b>		<b>Stimulus (ARRA) Funds? Yes No X</b>	
<b>Customer Contact Information</b>			
<b>Agency/Public University:</b> MS Dept of Rehabilitation Services Address: 1281 Hwy 51 North, Madison, MS 39110		<b>Contact Person:</b> Paula Brown <b>Phone:</b> 601-853-5141 <b>Fax:</b> <b>Email Address:</b> pbrown@mdrs.ms.gov	
<b>MAGIC Customer Number</b> (only required from state agencies): 700000184 (DRS-Vocational Rehabilitation)		<b>Division/Dept:</b> <b>Handmail:</b> X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<b>Project Summary Narrative Description of Project</b> (include details of original acquisition if applicable):  The Mississippi Division of Medicaid (MDOM) LTSS system is customized for MDOM and is available for use by all of their partners. In order for MDRS to utilize the system, upgrades are needed for the AACE system to integrate with the LTSS system. MDRS is also required to integrate their existing AWARE software to the State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Common Intake and Reporting System (MS WORKS). Medicaid has agreed to set aside money needed for MDRS to make the required changes for their integration. In addition, the maintenance of the AACE system is being extended by three years.			
<b>ITS Acquisition Approval (CP-1) should be effective through this date</b> (Please allow time for all vendor invoices to be paid): 07/30/2018			
<b>Cost Estimates</b> <i>Fiscal Year</i>	<b>Initial Costs</b>	<b>Ongoing Costs</b>	<b>Time Constraints</b> Item Needed by: 08/01/15 Funds Expire: 12/31/18
FY16	\$226,800.00	\$318,483.00	<b>Anticipated Lifecycle of Products/System</b> (i.e. estimated years of effective use): 3 years  <b>Discuss Funding</b> (e.g. how much of needed funding is definite; total project budget; any matching or other non-state funds) Total budget funding. There are no non-state or matching funds.
FY17		\$334,407.00	
FY18		\$351,127.00	
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$1,230,817.00</b>	
<b>Acquisition Details</b>			
<b>Items Requested</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Building Location(s)</b>
3 years maintenance	1	Maintenance of existing AACE system	MDRS
WIOA integration	1	Integration to support MS WORKS	MDRS
Block units	1,500	Support services for integration	MDRS
<b>Describe platform &amp; infrastructure</b> (connectivity; software/hardware platforms; utilization of State Data Center resources: mainframe, eGovernment portal, payment engine, document management, hosting). For equipment or hosting outside the State Data Center, attach justification: Software is housed at main MDRS facility in Madison, MS.			
<b>Progress to Date:</b> What has been done related to this project, including any communication with ITS staff (data/voice/procurement/other)? Quote received from vendor.			
<b>Sole Source Certification</b> Note: Certification must be renewed for each revision or continuation of previous Sole Source Approvals.			
<b>Specific business requirements to be met by the requested products or services:</b> The AWARE software has been in production in the State since 2000 and is often referred to as AACE. Alliance is the only vendor who can make modifications to the AWARE software. Alliance is responsible for federally mandated changes to the AWARE software.			
<b>Explain why these products or services are the only ones that can meet your needs</b> (include unique features/special functionality): The AWARE software is proprietary software owned and licensed by Alliance Enterprises, Inc. The modifications to integrate with the LTSS system at the Mississippi Division of Medicaid can only be performed by Alliance Enterprises, Inc., as well as integration to the State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The AWARE software is also being renewed for three years of maintenance.			
<b>Explain why the source is the only entity that can provide the products or services</b> (Include other products/vendors researched or evaluated): Alliance Enterprises, Inc. is the only vendor who offers maintenance and support of the AWARE software and can make modifications to the AWARE software.			

**Explain why the amount to be expended for the services is reasonable:**

This project is expected to be 2-3 months in duration. This is a very reasonable duration and a minimum of 2 months shorter given the vendor already knows:

- o The Aware server implementation at MDRS
- o Aware data model and business rules
- o The MDRS technical and business staff
- o Aware system and WIOA regulations
- o Webservice integration with Aware

Vendor has proposed a fixed-bid, deliverable based contract. The vendor assumes the risk if the work takes longer than anticipated.

**Explain what your agency did to obtain the best possible price for the services:**

Using this vendor will save the State a total of 110 to 180 billable hours, between \$16,500 to \$36,000, depending on the consultant hourly rates. The vendor is already knowledgeable in the Aware system, WIOA draft regulations and Federal reporting policy directives. The State will not incur costs for the consultant to read/learn the regulations. This also reduces the elapsed time of the project, saving the State 40-100 hours of billable hours.

The vendor has developed designs for future product improvements to align with new WIOA regulations. The State will not incur costs for the consultant to listen to all user group meetings and study the designs, saving the State 20-30 hours of billable hours.

The vendor is the developer of the system, has all technical documentation and subject matter experts. The State will not incur costs for the consultant to learn the Aware system including the data model, saving the State a minimum of 50 hours of billable hours.

The vendor works remotely on multiple projects at one time. The State will not incur costs of the consultant "down time" between meetings with the State or nSPARC staff. The vendor provides a variety of job functions to fulfill this project including: Account Manager, Project Manager, Sr. Business Systems Analyst and Sr. Technical Architect. The State does not incur the costs to ramp up each of these individuals or pay their rate while not fully engaged in the project.

Vendor's Certification of Sole Source attached:  Yes  No

Vendor's proposal submitted:  Yes  No

MAGIC Vendor Code(s) Vendor must be in MAGIC before a CP-I can be issued.

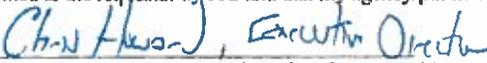
Place Order To

Vendor Name: ALLIANCE ENTERPRISES INC  
Vendor Address: 5421 Peninsula Drive, Olympia, WA 98513

Remit To

Vendor Name: ALLIANCE ENTERPRISES INC  
Vendor Address: 5421 Peninsula Drive, Olympia, WA 98513

By my signature, I certify that, to the best of my professional knowledge: the requested product or services are a sole source as outlined in the ITS Procurement Handbook, Rule 207.2:013-030 Procurement Types: Sole Source, and as outlined in Mississippi Code annotated Section 31-7-13. In addition, I acknowledge that there is a charge for ITS procurement services associated with this request which will be billed to the requestor by ITS and that my agency/public university is responsible for these charges/costs.

  
Name (Agency Head or Public University CIO)/Title

 4/3/11  
Signature Date



July 23, 2015

Paula Brown  
Director of Management Information Services  
Mississippi Dept. of Rehabilitation Services  
1281 Hwy 51 North  
Madison, MS 39110

Dear Ms. Brown:

The **Aware** software is proprietary software owned and licensed to the State of Mississippi by Alliance Enterprises, Inc. (Alliance). (**Aware** has been in production in the State since 2000 and is often referred to as AACE.) In addition, **Aware** is currently being used in production by 32 vocational rehabilitation programs in 28 states, with more than 10,000 agency end users. Alliance is the market leader for providing vocational rehabilitation case management systems in the United States.

Alliance is the only vendor who offers maintenance and support of the **Aware** software, who has staff fully trained in **Aware** adaptation, maintenance and operations, has access to the **Aware** source code, and has access to all of the **Aware** technical documentation.

In addition, Alliance is the only vendor who:

- Can provide Block Services for customizations to **Aware**
- Can make modifications to **Aware** to support the WIOA changes
- Can implement a strategy to integrate **Aware** and the State WIOA Common Intake and Reporting System (MS WORKS)
- Can make modifications to the **Aware** MDRS OSDP custom case type

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelley Pieper".

Shelley Pieper  
Internal Sales Representative

## **Attachment C: Sole Source Procurement Overview**

The acquisition of information technology for all state agencies and institutions of higher learning (IHLs) is within the scope of the ITS law, found in Mississippi Code Section 25-53-1, et seq., and the policies and procedures established in accordance with this statute, found in the ITS Procurement Handbook posted on the ITS website ([www.its.ms.gov](http://www.its.ms.gov)).

ITS enabling legislation requires that information technology hardware, software and services be acquired in a manner that insures the maximum of competition among all manufacturers and suppliers of such equipment and services. Accordingly, ITS promotes full and open competition through the issuance of open specifications and the objective evaluation of Interested Party proposals to determine the lowest and best offering to meet an agency's or public university's business requirements. True competition protects the integrity and credibility of purchasing in the public sector and is essential in providing best value and adequate contractual protection for the purchasing entity. In certain limited situations, information technology acquisitions may be sole-sourced.

ITS utilizes the provisions of Public Purchasing Law for Sole Source and Emergency procurements of information technology. Mississippi Public Purchasing Law (Mississippi Code Section 31-7-13) specifies that noncompetitive items available from one source only be exempted from bid requirements (sole-sourced). ITS statute, in Section 25-53-5 (p), permits ITS to utilize provisions in Public Purchasing Law or regulations, when applicable.

Per Public Purchasing law, acquisitions must meet the following criteria to be authorized as sole source:

1. The product or services being purchased must perform a function for which no other product or source of services exists,
2. The purchaser must be able to show specific business objectives that can be met only through the unique product or services, AND
3. The product or services must be available only from the manufacturer and NOT through resellers who could submit competitive pricing for the product or services. The vendor's correspondence regarding this criterion for this project is included as Attachment B.

By policy as documented in the ITS Procurement Handbook, acquisitions of IT services must include the following information to be authorized as sole source:

1. An explanation about why the amount to be expended is reasonable, and
2. An explanation regarding the efforts by the purchaser to obtain the best possible price.

For state agencies, approval of all technology purchases with a lifecycle cost of \$5,000 or less, including sole source purchases, has been delegated to the agency. The ITS Procurement Limits Policies for Agencies (a section in the ITS Procurement Handbook) require a minimum of two competitive written bids or proposals for technology purchases with a lifecycle cost over \$5,000 but not over \$50,000 (not over \$25,000 for projects funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act). Since, for single source items, the procuring agency will be unable to obtain two written bids, ITS must certify all sole source acquisitions of information technology with a lifecycle cost greater than \$5,000.

Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) or public universities have been delegated the authority to certify sole source procurements up to \$250,000 lifecycle cost under the ITS Procurement Limits Policies for IHLs (a section in the ITS Procurement Handbook). For the certification of sole source procurements delegated to the CIOs at public universities, the public university must follow ITS' Sole Source Procedure, including advertisement of the intent to award as sole source. Institutions certifying a sole source purchase must ensure the criteria listed above are met and documented in writing by the institution and the Interested Party prior to certifying a product or service as sole source. Sole source documentation must be reviewed and approved by the IHL's CIO for any sole-source certification above \$5,000. All sole source documentation should be retained in the public university's procurement file. Sole source requests above \$250,000 lifecycle cost require ITS approval.

## **Attachment C: Sole Source Procurement Overview**

Other than the delegations outlined above, all sole source technology procurements must be certified by ITS. The customer's Sole Source Certification Request for this project is included as Attachment A.

ITS thoroughly reviews Sole Source Certification Requests, determining if competing products and/or services exist. If so, ITS conducts a competitive procurement. If ITS' review confirms the sole source, then a Sole Source advertisement is issued, giving other Interested Parties an opportunity to identify competing products and/or services. Based upon the results of the Sole Source advertisement, ITS will either certify the request as a sole source or conduct a competitive procurement.